MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE and WRITINGS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq;

The English Aristophanes.

[illegible]

[illegible]

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE and WRITINGS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq;

The English Aristophanes:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

The Bon Mots, Repartees, and Good Things
said by that great and eccentric
Genius.

THE MEMOIRS &c.

SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq: the ſubject of theſe memoirs, was deſcended from a very antient family at Truro, in Cornwall; his father was member of parliament for Tiverton, in Devonſhire, and alſo, commiſſioner of the prize-office, and fine contract; his mother was heireſs to the Dinely, and Goodere families, and in conſequence of a quarrel and murder between the two brothers of that name, ſhe became poſſeſſed of a very conſiderable fortune, not leſs as ſome aſſert, than five thouſand per annum.

The firſt part of his education he received at a ſchool in Truro, from whence at a proper age he was enter'd of Worceſter College, in the Univerſity of Oxford, a college founded by one of his near relations. From this ſeat of learning he removed to the temple, being deſigned for the ſtudy of the law, but the fatigue of poring over a ſet of muſty old books not ſuiting his volatile genius, he quitted all thoughts of the bar, for the more alluring pleaſures of the town.

Early in life, Mr. Foote came in to the poſſeſſion of an ample fortune, but the extraordinary livelineſs of his diſpoſition added to an uncommon quickneſs of parts, rendering him a very deſirable companion, he ſoon form'd a large circle of acquaintance, and joining with them in all the diſſipation of the times, found himſelf in diſtreſs in a very few years.

It would be endleſs, as well as unentertaining, to follow him in this early part of life, when his character was not yet ſufficiently

ciently the object of curiosity, perhaps we might in such a case find him one day in a coach, and the next in prison; at one time setting up for member of parliament, and at another time broiling a beef steak in a garret. We are told that he had an elder brother in Jamaica, whose large fortune in some measure, contributed to give the younger brother a degree of consequence in the city, that he might not otherwise have obtained.

In a whimsical moment he thought on the stage as a field for fame, and fortune; he, however, in some measure in the beginning, certainly mistook his powers, as his first appearance was in Othello, at the little theatre in the Hay Market as a trial; but, he had too much good sense not to see that his *Forte* did not lie in this cast of playing, he therefore turned to Comedy, in which he came off with more success; he appeared in Fondlewife, Lord Foppington, Sir Paul Pliant, &c. he was greatest in his Clowns and Drivellers, but it was a general remark, that he mixed

too much of his own natural character in the part he repreſented, and in whatever he played, the audience always ſaw Mr. Foote.

His applauſe therefore, was not what either his ambition or his merit entitled him to expect, ſo that leaving the beaten tracts of the ſtage, and diſdaining to be *the parrot of the poets thought*, ſtruck out into a new and un-trodden path, by which he added to the entertainment of the town, and at the ſame, ſupplied in a great meaſure the deficiency of an exhauſted fortune; his ſcheme was in ſome meaſure, to introduce the high wrought characters of the Italian Comedy on the Engliſh ſtage.

About this time, the year 1746, Mr. James Worſdale, uſed to entertain private company's with an humourous exhibition of the foibles of his acquaintance; in which he joined at once the powers of a great knowledge of nature, and exquiſite mimicry: Mr. Foote, whoſe powers in both were better fitted

ted by a more liberal education, and by keeping better company, reſolved to entertain the town with mimicry better ſupported, and leſs vulgar than that of Worſdale; he therefore took upon himſelf the double character of poet and player, and with this view opened the little theatre in the Hay-market, in the year 1747, with a dramatic piece of his own writing and performing called the Diverſions of the Morning. This piece conſiſted of nothing more than the introduction of ſeveral well known characters about town, who had little merit or much abſurdity, Dr. T—r and two or three more, whoſe lectures, converſation, and peculiarities he had very happily hit in the diction of this drama, and ſtill more exactly repreſented by the humourous manner in which he dreſſed and brought forth his characters. In the latter part alſo of this piece, under the character of a theatrical director, he took off with great humour and accuracy, the ſeveral ſtiles or manner of acting of each performer then on both theatres.

Mimicry being a thing rather too perſonal to be permitted, and Mr. Foote, not as yet being poſſeſſed of ſufficient popularity to bear down oppoſition, his efforts in the beginning met with a check; for Mr. Lacy, of Drury-Lane theatre, put the act of parliament in force againſt him, for limiting the number of play-houſes, &c. This induced him under the patrimony of a noble Duke, to alter the title of his piece; and inſtead of inviting the town to ſee a play, he only intreated the company of his friends to *tea*: thus he proceeded without being moleſted, and gave his Tea in a run of upwards of forty mornings, to crowded and ſplendid audiences.

The enſuing ſeaſon he produced another piece of the ſame kind, called the *Auction of Pictures*; in this he introduced a number of new characters extremely well known, and hit off particularly Sir Thomas De Veil, then the acting juſtice of the peace for Weſtminſter, Mr. Cock, the celebrated auctioneer of

that

that time, the famous orator, Henley, and ſeveral others.

Neither of theſe pieces have yet appeared in print, and were probably calculated merely for exhibition: from theſe incipient efforts he proceeded to works of greater regularity. *Taſte*, a little piece, in two acts, was one of thoſe; the character of Lady Pentweazle he borrowed from the outline of his friend, Worſdale, and this is ſtill held as a high finiſhed piece. To that ſucceeded the *Knights*, a Comedy of two acts; the *Engliſhman in Paris*, of two acts; the *Author*; the *Engliſhman returned from Paris*; the *Minor*; the *Orators*; the *Mayor of Garrat*; the *Commiſſary*, and *Lyar*. During the writing of the above pieces he had ſeveral engagements with the managers of Drury-lane theatre, where he brought moſt of them out, and play'd the principal part in them.

At this time he uſed to make frequent trips to Ireland, and performed on the ſtage there,

there, though his receipts from the the theatre in London were very handſome: in theſe excurſions he uſed to bring out the new pieces he had juſt before exhibited in London, and by not ſelling immediately the copy, prevented any one elſe from producing them. In one of his pieces he introduced one Faulkner, the printer, in Dublin, which, when it was repreſented in that city, turned the man into ſuch ridicule, that he could not ſtand at his ſhop door for the ſkitts that were continually thrown out at him by every one almoſt that paſſed by him; ſo highly had he been ridiculed by Foote, who not only copied his ſpeech, but his dreſs and manner, that every one muſt have known the character at firſt ſight. What ſeemed to affect Faulkner moſt, was a ludicrous ſtory which Foote makes him tell on his paſſage with his wife from Dublin to Holyhead, and is as follows:—"Going over in the packet from Dublin to England, a ſtorm aroſe, and every one expected the veſſel would be loſt; Mrs. Faulkner lamenting with her huſband the dreadful

ſituation

ſituation they were in, and how very near they were to eternity, he ſpoke to her in earneſt terms, and begged of her to anſwer him one queſtion: ſhe bid him name it. Tell me, my dear, ſays he, for perhaps we have not long to live, have you always been true to my bed? "Sink or ſwim reply'd Mrs. Faulkner, that ſecret ſhall go to the grave with me."

Faulkner reſented the behaviour of Foote, and brought an action at law againſt him, and recovered damages to the amount of three hundred pounds; this was a thundering ſtroke to a man who had ſeldom three hundred ſhillings before hand in the world. He therefore decamped *a la ſourdine*, left Dublin and his bail to compound or ſettle the matter as well as they could, and came to England, where he was, notwithſtanding, received with his uſual favour, and very humouroufly took off the lawyers and judges who had tried the cauſe in Ireland.

His

His Mayor of Garrat, which has always been a ſtanding diſh, and muſt ever be reliſhed whilſt ſuch characters exiſt; was wrote it is ſaid, to revenge himſelf on Mr. Lamb, a Fiſhmonger in the Strand, and a major in the Middleſex militia. It ſeems Lamb ſerved Foote with fiſh, and thinking his bill quite long enough, he dunned him very much for his money, finding however that words would have no effect, he arreſted him for it, and Foote in return reſolved to expoſe him for his aſſurance to arreſt an author, and therefore brought him forward in the character of Major Sturgeon.

The Commiſſary was written during the laſt war, to ridicule a ſet of men (at the head of which was a gentleman of Berkſhire) who by plundering their country under the name of Commiſſary, ſet up for fine gentlemen, without a ſingle requiſite to fill that character.—A diſpute that had happened between the immortal Doctor and Mr. Foote,

led

led him to introduce the doctor on the ſtage in the part of Catgut: the performer who perſonated him, ap'd him well, and both his perſon and dreſs ſtruck the audience at firſt ſight, and brought to their mind doctor ſol fa; the doctor having about that time added the name of author to the title of doctor, gave our wit fine room to exerciſe his fancy.

The principal figure in the author was ſuggeſted to him by a very intimate acquaintance, who calling on Foote one day, ſaw him in deep ſtudy, and aſking him why ſo thoughtful, he told him he was conſidering on ſome new characters for a play; come with me ſays his friend, and ſee my relations, juſt come to town, and I'll be hanged if you meet with ſuch originals any where as they are: Foote accompanied him and actually introduced them as the Cadwallader family: his friend to heighten the joke carried them the firſt night, it was repreſented to the theatre, but they were not ſuch fools but they knew their own pictures; the Lord Chamberlain had

licenſed

licenced the piece otherwiſe the author would have had a denial; a proſecution was then talked of, but by the intereſt of friends the matter was made up.

Sir F— B— D— was all along the faſt friend and daily companion of Foote, his finances it may therefore be ſuppoſed were no ways mended by the acquaintance, in ſhort he found himſelf at length very much out of elbows, and conſulted Foote how to repair his fortune.—His perſon was very fine, his age and external accompliſhments highly agreeable, the wit therefore adviſed him to get a wife with a great deal of money, the advice was highly agreeable to the Knight, but were was the woman to be found? Foote told him directly he knew a lady, if he did not mind beauty, that had a great fortune, and he believed he might after matrimony get rid of at a cheap rate, a bargain was ſtruck immediately, Foote called on the lady, who then lived in Dover-ſtreet, worked up a tale that her relations were going to petition the Chancellor

Chancellor for a jury to try her as non compos mentis, in order to get her fortune into their hands; ſhe aſked his advice in this affair, he recommended matrimony, by which he ſaid ſhe might perhaps be doubly revenged on them, in the firſt place by her marriage, and ſecondly by having children, her relations would be cut off from the ſucceſſion.—The lady was rather weak and eaſy to be impoſed on, a conjurer was mentioned to who lived not far off, and ſhe recommended to have her fortune told by him: Worſdale was properly planted as the doctor, and ſhe went to him to know about her huſband, the doctor plainly laid down to her that ſhe was not far off matrimony with the fineſt man in England, ſhe was anxious to know how and where ſhe ſhould ſee him, his conjurorſhip told her he would be in the Park, at a certain hour in the Mall, and would have the corner of a white handkerchief out of his pocket; ſhe went accordingly, D——l was there properly planted, and as ſhe could not muſter courage to ſpeak to him, he acccſted her, an acquaintance

quaintance enſued, in ſhort they were very ſoon married, laid one night together and then parted, ſhe got a huſband and he the money, and Foote it is ſaid was well paid for his brokerage, and both he and D——l returned to their pleaſures, little regarding the dupe they had made, or how ſhe ſolaced herſelf for his abſence.

Foote to aſſiſt him in his ſummer ſcheme when he was playing at the King's Theatre, in the Hay-market, as he had not then a ſufficient number of his own pieces to give a variety to the town; engaged Mr. Barry, Mrs. Dancer, (now Mrs. Barry) to perform there: Mr. Barry had not at that time been in England for many years, having quitted Covent-Garden, and commenc'd manager at a new Theatre in Crow-ſtreet, Dublin, which he and Mr. Woodward had jointly built, but which project falling to the ground after they had ſpent all their money, and run conſiderably in debt. Mr. Barry came over as above remark'd to play with Mr. Foote, and was

received

received by the public with the greateſt applauſe; at the ſame time Mr. Lee was alſo retain'd by Mr. Foote, and with Mr. Barry and Mrs. Dancer brought great houſes; Mr. Barry when the winter returned went back to his Theatre in Dublin, and thus played two or three ſeaſons with Mr. Foote, and then engaged at the winter Theatres here: Mr. Lee alſo by the applauſe he gained made a very good engagement with the managers.

The little Theatre was at this time enlargening, it being very ſmall before the alteration, and having but one gallery with the way into the pit at each angle of the front boxes; here alſo Mr. Barry and Mrs. Dancer accompanied him and performed ſeveral nights, Mackheath and Polly with great eclat.

Mr. Foote might be conſidered about this period in the full poſſeſſion of his powers, he was not fifty, enjoyed a great ſhare of health, and was much followed by the public, but alas! all human happineſs is but tranſitory,

being

being one day out on a hunting match with the late Duke of York and ſeveral of the nobility, he had the misfortune to break his leg by a fall from his horſe in leaping a ditch. The greateſt attention was paid to his misfortune, ſurgeons from london were immediately ſent for, but it being a compound fracture, it was found abſolutely neceſſary to take off his leg, which was done above the knee, as otherwiſe he could not have made uſe of a falſe leg. He ſpeedily recovered from this accident and good aroſe to him from evil.–He had long before this been ſoliciting his noble friends to procure him a patent, which all his interceſſion and their intereſt were unable to bring about, but luckily, (if we may uſe the expreſſion) for him the loſs of his leg with the preſſing ſolicitation of the Duke had the deſired effect, and accordingly a patent was iſſued to him giving him licence and liberty to open a Theatre in London, from the 15th day of May to the 15th day of September both incluſive the time of of opening and ſhutting up of his Theatre were fix'd in the

above

above manner, that the Theatres of Covent-Garden and Drury-Lane might not be injured thereby: the performers benefits were generally over by the 15th of May, the remainder of the benefits being only the box-keepers and ſervants, and the uſual time of opening thoſe Theatres, was not till the 17th or 20th of September, theſe regulations were thought abſolutely neceſſary, and are particularly expreſſed in the patent.

On the grant of this patent the little theatre, (now the theatre royal) underwent another repair and great enlargement, a houſe was purchaſed in the Hay-market, a new front erected, and the inſide made as convenient and neat as the building would admit, a houſe was taken at the back of the theatre in Suffolk-ſtreet, where Mr. Foote reſided, part of which he converted into a green room, wardrobe, and other neceſſary conveniencies, and we now for the firſt time ſee him patentee and manager of a theatre royal.

About this time the great diſpute between the fellows and licentiates of the college of phyſicians attracted the notice of the whole kingdom, and the ridiculous figure which the quarrel threw them into by the aſſault on the college, made both parties heartily to be laughed at. So fine a ſubject with ſo open a field for ſatire could not eſcape the notice of Foote; he immediately worked it up into a three act piece, and produced it whilſt the ſtory was freſh in every ones mouth, under the title of the Devil on two ſticks. The event fully anſwered his moſt ſanguine expectations, for he played it near forty nights, full two thirds of the time allotted by his patent, and the receipts of that ſeaſon are reckoned the greateſt he has ſince known, the net profits being upwards of four thouſand pounds.

The Devil ever ſince has been highly reliſhed by the public, and perhaps it may be attributed to a piece of generalſhip in Foote, and which the managers of our winter theatres have now entered upon. Finding the avidity

of

of the public to ſee the repreſentation to be ſo great, he concluded it would be greatly abated if they could read the play in their cloſets, determined not to print it which reſolution he has kept in all his ſucceeding pieces, two only excepted, viz. the Lame Lover and the Bankrupt.

To the Devil ſucceeded the Lame Lover, very palpably a haſty production; but tho' it did not ſucceed ſo well as the devil, yet it brought him money; it was an aſſemblage of jokes put together in a hurry, (for he has has been always accus'd of leaving every thing to the laſt moment); it however ſerved as a *remove* in his ſummer bill of fare, and as it did not *draw*, he reſolved to make the moſt of it by ſelling the copy, and ſuffering it to be publiſhed; the title drew the people, for having loſt his leg, they naturally concluded he would perform the part from whence the piece was titled, and much humour would be introduced; they were not

disappointed in their opinion, for all the *good things* were put into his own mouth.

The public now being accustomed to see him with his cork leg on the stage, it did not appear strange to them, and he therefore thought he need not confine himself in his parts; the Devil and the Lame Lover being both so calculated, that the defect of his cork leg was not seen; or if seen, did not injure in any measure the representation; in the former always appearing with twocrutch-headed canes, and in the latter being a gentleman who had but one leg.

Mr. Foote had at this time an elegant villa at North-End, Fulham; a handsome town house in Suffolk Street, and got a great deal of money, but he wished to employ his winter evenings; an opportunity offered, Mr. Ross the manager of the Edenbro theatre; finding business did not answer there, had very wisely made an engagement with the managers of Covent Garden, and agreed

to

to let the theatre at Edenbro. Mr. Foote took it of him at the clear yearly rent of ſix hundred pounds for the uſe of the houſe, cloaths, ſcences, &c, for the term of three years; a company was therefore formed, among which were Woodward, and Weſton, the former at the amazing ſum of fourteen pounds a week.

Mr. Foote accordingly went down to Edenbro in his own carriage and livery ſervants, and lived in that ſplendor which the Scotch had not been accuſtomed to in a *play actor*; in the evening, he uſed to come down the High Street (from the Caſtle Hill, where he lived) in his coach with two flambeax behind, almoſt an unuſual ſight in that city, as moſt people go in chairs from the ſmall number of paſſages that will admit of a carriage. The mob could hardly bear this inſolence as they thought it, and would frequently call after the coach in deriſion "there "goes the *play actor*."

The nobility and gentry, however, throng'd to the theatre; the firſt night of opening was the Commiſſary, and Valet, and the receipts were one hundred and twenty three pounds; this was on a ſaturday, the monday following Woodward exhibited, and played Marplot and the Drunken Colonel, to ſeventy five pounds; ſums the former manager never could riſe to—a like ſucceſs continued through the ſeaſon, and many of the performers got money by their benefits, though the charges (every thing included) amounted to near fifty pounds more than double what they had uſed to have been before that ſeaſon.

Notwithſtanding the amazing expences he paid, yet at the end of the ſeaſon he cleared ſeven hundred pounds; a ſum that would have appeared very great to the former managers, yet could not be allowed ſufficient to pay the trouble, and riſque of Mr. Foote as manager, as well as actor; therefore, tho' he had agreed for the theatre for three years, yet he reſolved not to reviſit Edenbro; it was

it was too far from London for a man that had two legs he uſed to ſay, and much more ſo for him that had but one: he accordingly quitted that city as ſoon as the ſeaſon cloſed and returned to London, and there aſſigned over the remainder of his term to Meſſrs. Digges and Bland, who are ſtill in poſſeſſion of that theatre, though at a ſmaller rent than what Mr. Foote paid, it being found too large for any but him to be able to give.

At his return to town he again made ſome alterations at his theatre, he purchaſed the houſe next his own in Suffolk-ſtreet, by which he was enabled to make a ſtage door, and a way to behind the ſcenes, for before that time the performers and all the ſervants, even to the pot girl went in at the box door, and behind the ſide boxes to the ſtage, ſo that frequently a Barber and a Peer had a re-encounter in the paſſage, and as it was but narrow his Lordſhip robbed the Friſeur of part of his powdered coat.

The

The Maid of Bath was now produced, the ſubjects were certainly very proper objects of ſatire; the old gentleman's meaneſs and avarice, and Mrs. Linnet's pride claimed the laſh of the Comic Muſe, the introduction of Lady Coldſtream was a lucky thought, the having Mrs. Fearon in the company muſt have ſuggeſted it, and the introduction of it though the piece might have done without it was not a little helped thereby. This piece had a very good run and brought money into the managers pocket, the ſtory of Miſs Linnet and Mr. Flint was well known at Bath and in London, and no wonder then if it ſucceeded.

Mr. Foote now began to think of producing every year *ſomething new*, with a curious eye he watched the current of the times and always took care to ſeize the moſt ſtriking objects. A gentleman juſt arrived from India, making a great figure in the gay world, and who from a very low family had roſe to a princely fortune which he diſſipated in affecting

ing the manners of the ton without one qualification requiſite to form the gentleman. this perſon Mr. Foote made the hero of his piece, and chriſtened it from the name uſualy given to thoſe who return rich from the Eaſt. Indies, viz. the *Nabob*. The public curioſity was greatly excited by the title and the comedy fully anſwered their expecteations, as well as thoſe of the manager, who performed the part himſelf, and moſt capitally.

The Bankrupt next came forward on this ſtage. The misfortunes of a capital houſe in the city gave riſe to this piece, which is much more ſentimenal than any other of Mr. Foote's plays; he however has larded it as much as poſſible with humour.—The printers ſcene is truly laughable,—This piece he has given to the public, having publiſhed it laſt year; according to the ſtage phraſe it did not draw ſo much as his other plays, and perhaps on that account he thought it beſt to ſell the copy.

A late unfortunate Divine having given ſome cauſe of complaint in an offer to the Chancellor of a ſum of money for the preſentation to the living of St. George's, which then fell vacant, and was in his gift. The Chancellor expoſed the affair, which was carried on by the doctor's lady in a viſit to that of his lordſhip, and the conſequence was the doctor's being ſtruck off the liſt of King's Chaplains: this circumſtance with a lady who had made herſelf famous for keeping an intrique and place ſhop, helped to furniſh the principal characters of the Drama of the Cozeners, being larded pretty much with ſcandal, it without doubt was very palatable to the public and well received; however the next ſeaſon after its firſt repreſentation, an additional ſcene was added faſhioned out of an old ſtory, but ſo well told, that it was received with pleaſure: it was that of a lady going to a mercers in her coach, buying a quantity of ſilk, and taking him with her in her carriage home, to receive the money; inſtead of which ſhe drives to a mad doctor's, where

ſhe

ſhe gives the doctor an account of the mercer being a relation of hers, and out of his ſenſes. The lady takes her leave of the mercer, deſiring the doctor to ſatisfy him, which he promiſes to do; a ridiculous and laughable converſation by a miſunderſtanding ariſes between the doctor and mercer, when the latter is carried off by the doctor's ſervants, crying out that he ſhould bring an action for falſe impriſonment for Wilkes's affair was but a flea-bite to his. This piece in 1776 was performed many nights, and to crowded audiences.

The Dutcheſs of K——, who had long been a general topic of converſation, our wit thought would very well furniſh a ſubject for a three act piece: he ſet about it, and during the time of writing it, often mentioned it to his friends, to ſome of whom he read the character of Lady Kitty Crocodile, which was intended for her Grace. We are told the ſatire was very high ſeaſoned, and the play one of the beſt he ever wrote. Her

Grace

Grace heard an account of her being intended as a principal in one of Foote's pieces preparing for repreſentation, applied through her friends, to the Lord Chamberlain, and when the play came before his Lordſhip for his approbation, it was critically ſcanned, and a permiſſion refuſed. Mr. Foote, however, certain that no objection could be laid to it on her Grace's part, ſent her the manuſcript to read, but ſhe was inexorable. 'Tis ſaid, that Foote aſked her Grace three thouſand pounds to lay it aſide, but this was a miſrepreſentation of the affair, Foote only remarked to a gentleman employed to go between him and her Grace, that it would be a loſs to him of three thouſand pounds, for as the ſeaſon was advanced, he could not poſſibly provide another piece, and the profits reaſonably to be expected from it, would amount to that ſum, and therefore he could not poſſibly ſuppreſs it, under what he might expect to receive from the repreſentation. It was, however, refuſed permiſſion, and a paper war immediately commenced between her

Grace

Grace and the wit, to the no ſmall entertainment of the town.

On the above account the ſeaſon at the Hay-market was finiſhed without any new piece, and the public greatly diſappointed, who flattered themſelves with being highly entertained at the expence of her Grace, and ſome other well known characters.

In the winter, Mr. Foote went to Dublin, and played there a number of nights at the amazing ſum of fifty pounds per night. It may not perhaps be amiſs to remark, that on his going to Ireland, he diſcharged ſuch ſervants as he had no occaſion for, among the reſt his coachman, who expreſſing his wiſhes to accompany his maſter, Mr. Foote very good-naturedly took him with him as a livery ſervant, having no occaſion for a coachman: on his return to London, and a ſhort time before the uſual ſeaſon began, the ſervant we have juſt now mentioned, having behaved very ill in the family, was diſcharged Mr. Foote's ſervice, and ſtraightways applied to

Sir

Sir John Fielding for a warrant to bring his maſter before the juſtice, for having taken very indecent liberties with his perſon.

Mr. Foote immediately gave in bail for his appearance at the quarter ſeſſions, from whence he removed the indictment to the court of King's bench, where it was accordingly tried, and Mr. Foote honourably acquitted.

The friends of the Dutcheſs of K———, on the firſt mention of the footman's ſtory, took him under their care, and managed his whole proſecution. The public papers were daily filled with calumny of the blackeſt dye, in order, if poſſible, to inflame the minds of the public againſt Mr. Foote, and prevent, his appearing on his theatre as an actor, which undoubtedly muſt have ſhut it up, as the company then ſtood, he having made no preparation for ſuch an attack, and his whole ſtrengh lying principally in his own performance, which had all along ſupported the theatre.

The

The time for opening came, but Mr. Foote was indeed afraid to appear before that awful tribunal, the public, till ſuch time as he had purg'd himſelf of the accuſations laid to his charge. Term was ſtill ſome way off, and though he was daily loſing money by not beginning, yet he rather choſe to be a ſufferer, than meet his friends till he had been exculpated of the charge. His intimate acquaintances, and ſome of the firſt nobility, inſiſted on his opening the theatre, which at their requeſt he did. The evening came, the houſe was crowded in a few minutes, every part of it; he made his appearance, was received with the loudeſt plaudits; in a very affecting ſpeech he told them he had long been their ſervant, and enjoyed their favour, and ſhould not have come before them had he not been compelled to it by the very warm ſolicitation of his friends; that he pledged himſelf to them, that he would prove to their utmoſt ſatisfaction, that the charge alledg'd againſt him was the offspring of malice, and no ways founded on truth. The performance went

on

on with great applauſe, and every one ſeemed to think he had been hardly uſed.

On the accuſation being made againſt him, and well knowing the fury of the parties who ſet the ſervant on, and who, he thought, would ſtick at nothing to accompliſh their ends, and bring about his deſtruction, he thought it moſt adviſeable to be prepared for ſuch a ſtroke, ſhould it happen, and accordingly entered into articles with Mr. Colman, to let to him the ſaid theatre, with all the ſcenes, cloaths, &c. &c. &c. for, and during his life, (which determines the patent) at, and for the ſum of fifteen hundred pounds per annum, clear of all charges and expences, however, during this, his laſt ſeaſon for holding the managerial chair, he altered and new modelled the piece which had been refuſed permiſſion, by entirely changing the characters, and indeed the plot, and it accordingly paſſed the fiery trial of the chamberlain, and was produced under the title of the Capuchin. When we conſider that the

character

characters in the fore ground of the piece were obliged to be taken out, and how great the alteration it muſt occaſion in the ſituation of the other parts We cannot wonder if in the repreſentation it ſhould not appear ſo perfect as the reſt of his pieces: it however anſwered his purpoſe, for the ſeaſon, (notwithſtanding the tongues of villainous ſlander were ſo much abroad) was one of the beſt he had ever experienced at the Hay-market.

In April laſt he was attacked with a fit of apoplexy, which however, did not make any great impreſſion on him; he was again lively and well, and on the Saturday before he ſet out for France, was as chearful, and in as good ſpirits as his friends ever remember to have ſeen him. On the Monday following he ſet out, attended only by his Valet, for France, and at Dover (ſuppoſed to have caught cold) was taken ill, where he had a fit of apoplexy; he took to his bed, where in a ſhort time he died, on the 19th day of Oc-

tober, 1777, his body was brought up to town, to his houſe in Suffolk-ſtreet, from whence it was interred in funeral pomp,

The following are a liſt of the pieces written by Mr. Foote.

Taſte, a Comedy of two Acts.
Knights, Ditto
Engliſhman in Paris, ditto
Engliſhman returned from Paris, ditto.
Author, ditto.
Lyar, ditto, in three acts.
Mayor of Garrat, ditto, in two acts.
Minor, ditto, in three acts.
Commiſſary, ditto, in ditto.
The Patron, ditto, in ditto.
The Devil upon two Sticks, in three acts.
The Maid of Bath, ditto.
The Nabob, ditto.
The Cozeners, ditto.

The

The Bankrupt, ditto.
The Capuchin, ditto

Few authors can boaſt of having written ſo many; perhaps no one of having ſo rarely experienced the cenſure of the theatre, His *Forte* was the exhibition of character, in which, although he was rather a painter for effect, than the holder of a delicate pencil, for boldneſs of outline, and ſtrength and truth of colouring, he ſtood unrivalled. His dialogue in general is terſe, eaſy, and witty. His ſcenes teem with true humour, and under the maſk of infinite pleaſantry, convey the ſtrongeſt ſatire. No dramatic writer ever paid leſs attention to the fable of his plays, and yet there are not to be ſeen in the whole round of modern pieces, ſo many ſtriking pictures of vice and folly as have been drawn by the late Mr. Foote; he may truly be ſaid to have "caught the living manners as they "roſe," and to have the happy art of preſenting, whatever he deſigned to exhibit, in a point of view ſo truly ridiculous, that every

auditor

auditor was under the neceſſity of joining in the general laughter excited, and left the theatre not the leſs amended for having been uncommonly well entertained. To ſum up all we have to offer in this haſty attempt to do him ſome ſort of juſtice; as an author he was fertile, comic, and nervous; as an actor bold, original, and warm; his talents, it is true, lay rather in the exhibition of caricature than character; in a peculiar line, however, and that of a capital ſort, he was not only maſterly, but ſuperior to every competitor. As a private man, he was humane, generous, and friendly; ſoftened by the tale of diſtreſs, liberal in the relief of indigence or the reward of merit, and ready on all occaſions to aſſiſt either with his pen, his purſe, or his perſonal intereſt, all who had the ſmalleſt claim to his friendſhip. In the company of men of high rank, and ſuperior fortune, (who eagerly ſought his acquaintance) he preſerved an eaſy and noble independency; as a man of wit and conviviality there lives not his equal. Nor was he leſs hoſpitable

than

than ſocial; his many, many friends who now live ſincerely to lament his loſs can atteſt this aſſertion. Since no man therefore has more eſſentially contributed to the entertainment of the public, nor more repeatedly made the minds of his acquaintance expand with mirth and good humour, let us in gratitude paſs over his few foibles, and reflect on his many virtues, with that mixture of joy and ſorrow felt by every individual, who in the moment he regrets the loſs of a dear friend, rejoices that among the actions of his life many deſerve the higheſt praiſe, and that the effuſions of his genius have eſtabliſhed him a degree of fame ſuperior to the blaſts of envy, the efforts of malice, and the corroding tooth of time itſelf.

All Mr. Foote's baggage was embarked when he was ſeized with the fatal illneſs that carried him off, and the veſſel in which he was to have gone to Calais, ſailed the very ſame day, ſo that if he had continued in health firm enough to travel, his friends would

would have loſt ſeveral little teſtimonies of his eſteem, as all the effects he dyed poſſeſſed of would have been forfeited to the crown of France, by the Droits D'aubaine.

Mr. Foote left a ſon, now at a boarding-ſchool in Ayleſbury, to whom he has bequeathed all he was poſſeſſed of. The late Mr. Fitzherbert, Mr. Hamilton, of Falcon-Court, Fleet-ſtreet, and Mr. Jewell, (for many years his treaſurer and ſteward) are named in his will his executors.

BON MOTS,

JESTS, REPARTEES, &c. &c.

FOOTE in his imitations took off moſt of the actors who had any thing remarkable either in their *ſpeech*, *air* or *gait*. Among the number he introduced on the Hay-Market ſtage, was Mr. Obryen, of Drury-lane theatre. Being then but a new performer, a young man, and a perfect maſter of the ſword (his father being a fencing-maſter) he determined to call Foote out; his brother comedians laughed at the reſolution he had taken, and ſaid, nobody minded it; that he ought to make himſelf happy, when he conſidered that his very defects gave bread to an individual, only by copying them. He was not, however, to be put out of his purpoſed intention. He accordingly ſent Mr. Foote a note, that he ſhould be glad to ſpeak a few words with him, and waited on him. After attending a ſhort while in the parlour, Foote appeared. Obryen be-

gan immediately on the injury he had done him in his profeſſion, by making him appear ridiculous to the town, in *taking him off*. Foote endeavoured, at firſt, to laugh him out of his anger, but it would not do; at length he ſaid to him, ſince, Sir, you ſeem to be of opinion that *taking any perſon off* is making them ridiculous, if you will but have a moment's patience, you ſhall ſee me *take* myſelf off. Obryen could not conceive what he was going about; knowing the humour of the man, he expected ſomething very curious and entertaining to divert him from taking things in a ſerious light; he therefore ſat down, and Foote, as to prepare himſelf, opened the door and went out. Obryen waited impatiently after the expiration of five minutes, and ringing the bell, aſked the footman where his maſter was. "Gone out, Sir," ſays he. "I know," ſays Obryen, "he went out of the parlour;" "but," replied the man, "he is gone out of the houſe." Obryen took his hat and left Foote's, and never mentioned the matter again; the joke of Foote's *taking himſelf off* having

having fully ſatisfied for what he thought an injury, but he ſoon learnt that every man in public life muſt ſubmit to.

Foote and Garrick were always on very good terms as acquaintances, yet, notwithſtanding, Foote could not help having a cut at Garrick, whenever any opportunity offered. A young gentleman, inclined to the ſtage, aſked Mr. Foote's opinion as to which theatre he ſhould apply; he replied, that Garrick certainly had judgment to diſcern and candour to allow of merit wherever he found it; but adviſed him to be cautious in making his bargain, for in that he would be too hard almoſt for the devil himſelf.

Foote in all his pieces where he has introduced a Scotchman, has been very ſevere on that nation; 'twas from no antipathy he had to them, but jokes more readily ſprang up from ſatire than panegyric, and he was one of that ſort, that he would rather loſe his friend than his jeſt. In the Devil upon Two Sticks, where two phyſicians are diſcourſing toge-

ther, the one Scotch and the other Iriſh; a ſtander-by aſks if botany is not a dry ſtudy in Scotland; to which the Iriſhman replies, "to be ſure it is, for they have nothing but dried herbs, the devil a green one will grow there. Why, all their cabbages are thiſtles, and even thoſe they raiſe in hot beds."

Foote's wooden, or rather cork leg, was ſo well contrived by ſprings, that he could move his knee, ancle and toes, and but for a ſmall hitch in his gait, which thoſe who did not know him took for lameneſs, he might very well have paſſed as having both his legs. Going after the Hay-market had ſhut up, to ſpend the remainder of the ſeaſon at Brighthelmſtone, a German baron being in company with him and ſome more gentlemen, and bragging very much of his courage, Foote dared him to run a pin into the calf of his leg, which he accepted; the wit immediately took a pin and ran into his cork leg; the baron, with much-ado, ſqueezed one in his, but hopped about the room, making a moſt hideous roar, whilſt Foote

ſat

ſat quiet with his friends at the table, laughing at the baron's folly.

An Iriſh country gentleman, who was rather an œconomiſt for the meridian of that country, whenever he found his gueſts diſpoſed to puſh about the bottle briſkly, uſed frequently to enter into a panegyric on the virtues of his daughter, which being a ſubject the company were in good manners obliged to liſten to, anſwered the deſired intent. One day boaſting how much ſhe ſaved him as an œconomiſt, Foote being preſent, and ſeeing the bottle ſtand before him for above half an hour, exclaimed, "And beſides all this, gentlemen, there is not a year of his life ſhe does not likewiſe ſave him above a *tun of wine*."

It may be neceſſary, perhaps, for the information of our female readers, to acquaint them, that at auctions of prints in the evening, the auctioneer ſits in a chair at the head of the table with the bidders. At one of theſe auctions, at Mr. Smirk's, in Covent-garden,

garden, young Smirk held the hammer, and having a diſpute with old doctor———, who ſat next him, the young gentleman very *politely* hit the doctor a knock on the head with the hammer. Foote was there, and coming ſoon after into the Bedford coffee-houſe, was aſked what news from the auction? to which he anſwered, "that young Smirk had made a ſmall miſtake, and knocked down a gentleman inſtead of a lot."

The above Bon Mot Mr. Foote afterwards introduced, and with great ſucceſs, in his comedy of the Minor, when ſpeaking of the death of Mr. Smirk.

Foote being ſome time ſince at a nobleman's houſe, his lordſhip, as ſoon as dinner was over, ordered a bottle of Cape to be ſet on the table, which, after magnifying its good qualities, and in particular its *age*, he ſent round the table in glaſſes that ſcarcely held a thimble-full. "Fine wine, upon my ſoul," ſays the wit, taſting and ſmacking his lips. "Is it not very *curious*, ſays his lordſhip? "perfectly ſo indeed," ſays the other: "I do

" I do not remember to have ſeen any thing *ſo little* of *its age* in my life before."

Mr. Baddeley, the comedian of Drury-lane, was bred to the profeſſion of a cook, and though conſidered as a very good one, yet left the kitchen for the ſtage. Weſton, with whom he was a great crony, introduced him to Foote, who brought him out at his theatre, from whence he got an engagement at Drury-lane, and roſe to the preſent eſteem in which he is held by the public. Mr. Foote, till very lately, never entered into any written agreements with his performers, his word was conſidered as ſufficient, (which he always inviolably kept.) Baddeley, after playing ſome ſeaſons with Foote, had got into a pretty large caſt of parts, and became very uſeful. Mr. Foote ſometime before his ſeaſon began, met him, and told him, he ſuppoſed he would be at the Haymarket as uſual in the ſummer; to which Baddeley replied, he ſhould certainly be with him. However, an opportunity offering in one of the country companies from London,

where

where Baddeley thought he ſhould get more money and have parts he liked better, joined the company without acquainting Mr. Foote, and ſet off for either Briſtol or Liverpool. When the Hay-market ſeaſon began, no Baddeley appeared, and Mr. Foote was at a loſs to ſupply immediately his place. On being told of his departure, Mr. Foote ſaid, "What an ungrateful fellow this is; I was the man that made a gentleman of him; for I took the ſpit* from out of his hands, and put it by his ſide."

When Mr. Foote was giving out the parts of his New Pieces to the ſeveral performers, he uſually had ſomething to ſay to each of them. In delivering thoſe of the Minor, he gave of Loader to Mr. Davis. "Now Davis," ſays he, "you will be at home to a hole; only be yourſelf through the part, and you cannot play it amiſs.

* At that time Mr. Baddeley and moſt of the players, were very fond of wearing ſwords in the park and about the ſtreets.

Baron

Baron B——w, a celebrated gambler, well known by the name of the *left-handed* Baron, being detected ſome years ago at Bath ſecreting a card, the company in the warmth of their reſentment, threw him out of the window of a *one-pair-of-ſtairs-room*, where they had been playing. The Baron meeting Foote ſome time after, was loudly complaining of this uſage, and aſked what he ſhould do. "Do," ſays the wit, "why it is a plain caſe, never play ſo *high* again as long as you live."

When Foot heard of Sir Francis Blake Deleval's death, the ſhock of loſing ſo intimate a friend had ſuch an effect on his ſpirits, that he burſt into tears, retired to his room, and ſaw no company for two days: the third day, Jewel, his treaſurer, calling in upon him, he aſked him, with ſwoln eyes, what time would the burial be? "Not till next week, Sir," replied the other, "as I hear the ſurgeons are firſt to diſſect his *head*." This laſt word recovered the wit's fancy, and repeating it with ſome

ſurprize, he aſked, "And what the devil will they get there: I am ſure," ſays he, "I have known poor Frank theſe five and twenty years, and I never could find *any thing* in it."

Foote being engaged to a rout of lady Harrington's, found the ladies all ſo thickly ſeated, that on his entering the drawing-room, he could not get a place to ſit down in. "Come, Foote," ſays her ladyſhip, "*you* muſt not be kept ſtanding, take a chair." "You are very obliging, my lady," ſays the wit; "but there appears to me to be more *bottoms* than *chairs* at preſent about the room."

When Mr. Foote's piece of the Minor was firſt brought out, ſome of the clergy took umbrage at a paſſage in it, which Mrs. Cole ſpeaks, *viz.* "had it not been for him, I had been a loſt ſheep." ſaying, that it was wrong to introduce any part of the Scriptures on the ſtage in buffoonery. The play was then performing, conſequently had received

ceived the approbation of the Chamberlain. The Biſhop of London, it is ſaid, ſent for Mr. Foote, and remonſtrated with him on the impropriety; Foote aſſured his lordſhip it ſhould be altered on the next repreſentation, which was accordingly done; for when he came to that line, he ſaid, "had it not been for him, I had been a loſt *muſician*."

The death of the late Mr. Holland, of Drury-Lane theatre (who was the ſon of *a baker* at Chyſwick) had likewiſe a very great effect on Foote's ſpirits; being a legatee, as well as appointed, by the will of the deceaſed, one of his bearers, he attended the corpſe to the family vault at Chyſwick, and there very ſincerely paid a plentiful tribute of tears to his memory. On his return to town, by way of alleviating his grief, he called in at the Bedford coffee-houſe, when an acquaintance coming up to him, aſked him if he had not been paying the laſt compliment to his friend Holland? "Yes, poor

fellow," says Foote, almost weeping at the same time, "I have just seen him *shoved* into the *family-oven*."

When Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son first came out, a gentleman was asking Foote, whether they did not contain great knowledge of the world, "O yes, Sir," says he, "very much, they inculcate the morals of a w—e, and the manners of a dancing-master."

Foote meeting his old acquaintance, Major B——r, at Bath, this last season, (a character well known in the annals of gaming) came up to him, and asked him with great cordiality, how he was? "Ah! Foote," says the other, "I have had a terrible accident since I saw you last; no less than the *loss* of an eye." "My dear fellow," says the wit, "I am heartily sorry for it; pray at *what game*?"

A physician at Bath told Mr. Foote, that he had a mind to publish his poems; "but," said he, "I have so many irons in the fire,

I do not know what to do." "Then take my advice," ſaid Foote, "and put your *poems into the fire with the reſt of your irons.*"

When Mrs. Macaulay publiſhed her *looſe thoughts*, Garrick, who was in company with Foote, ſaid, "it was a very improper title for a lady;" to which the wit replied, "he was of a different opinion: for the ſooner a woman got rid of her *looſe thoughts* the better."

Foote being one night very merry at the Bedford coffee-houſe, the converſation happened to turn on the abilities of Mr. Garrick, as an actor, when amongſt many compliments to that celebrated performer, it was obſerved as ſomewhat extraordinary, that though he was ſo excellent an actor himſelf, he was far from being lucky in his pupils. "Why yes," replies Foote, "he is ſomething like the famous running-horſe Childers, the beſt racer in England *himſelf*, but could *never get a colt.*"

At Mr. Fordyce's ſale at Rochampton, Foote, who attended almoſt every day, bought nothing but a *pillow*, on which a gentleman aſked him, what particular uſe he could have for a ſingle pillow? "Why," ſays Foote, "to tell you the truth, I do not ſleep very well at night, and I am ſure this muſt give me many a good nap, when the proprietor of it (though he *owed ſo much*) could ſleep upon it."

When Foote was laſt in Ireland, he happened to ſee at the Caſtle, one levée day, a perſon in the *ſuite* of the Lord Lieutenant, whom he thought he had known for many years to have lived rather a life of *expediency* in London; to corroborate his ſuſpicion, he aſked lord Townſend who he was. "That is one of my *gentlemen at large*," ſays his excellency: "Do you know him?" "O yes," ſays Foote, "very well; and what you tell me of him is very extraordinary; firſt that he is a *gentleman*; and next that he is *at large*."

Foote

Foote happening to ſpend the evening with two dignitaries of the church, the converſation inſenſibly turned upon a point of polemical divinity, which the two churchmen took up on different grounds, with great vehemence and ſtrength of argument. Foote, during the conteſt, took no other ſhare in the debate, than in recruiting their ſpirits, by conſtantly keeping their glaſſes filled: at laſt one of them turned about, and begged that, as he could be at times as argumentative, as witty, he would ſtep in as an arbitrator of their differences. "I thank you kindly, gentlemen," ſays Foote, very gravely; "but I have always made it a rule never to interfere in *family affairs*."

When Foote heard that doctor Kenrick was going to give a public criticiſm on his comedy of the Cozeners, at Marybone, "Well," ſays he, "let the doctor take care of the fate of our firſt parents; *a fall in the garden*."

About three years ago, Foote went to ſpend his Chriſtmas with the late C——— B———n,

B——n, Eſq; when the weather being very cold, and but bad fires, occaſioned by the ſcarcity of wood in the houſe, Foote was determined to make his viſit as ſhort as poſſible; accordingly, on the third day after he went there, he ordered his chaiſe, and was preparing to ſet out for town. Mr. B——n ſeeing him with his boots on in the morning, aſked him what hurry he was in, and preſſed him to ſtay. "No, no," ſays Foote, "was I to ſtay any longer, you would not let me *have a leg to ſtand on.*" "Why ſure," ſays Mr. B——n, "we do not drink ſo *hard.*" "No," ſays the wit, "but there is ſo *little* wood in your houſe, that I am afraid one of your ſervants may light the fires ſome morning with *my right leg.*"

A gentleman juſt married, telling Foote he had that morning laid out three thouſand pounds in jewels for his *dear wife.* "Faith, Sir," ſays the wit, "I ſee you are no hypocrite, for ſhe is truly your *dear* wife."

When

When Foote firſt heard of doctor Blair's writing notes to Oſſian, (a performance the *reality* of which has been doubted) he obſerved, that the bookſellers ought to allow a great diſcount to the purchaſers. "Why ſo," ſays a gentleman preſent. "Becauſe," ſays he, "they are *notes* of damned *long credit*."

Foote and Garrick being at a tavern together at the time of the firſt regulation of the gold coin, the former pulling out his purſe to pay the reckoning, aſked the latter, "What he ſhould do with a light guinea he had?" "'Pſhaw, its worth nothing," ſays Garrick, "*fling it to the devil.*" "Well David," ſays the other, "you are what I always took you for, ever contriving *to make a guinea go further* than any other man."

At the time of the Jubilee at Stratford, planned and conducted by Mr. Garrick, in honour of Shakeſpeare, the weather in general (though early in September) turned out very bad; particularly the day appointed for the public proceſſion, which obliged that part of the ceremony to be diſpenſed

with. Garrick meeting Foote on the morning of this day in the publick breakfasting-room, just in the moment of a very heavy shower of rain, Well, Sam," says he, rather disappointedly, " What do you think of this?" " Think of it," says Foote: " Why, I think, it is *God's revenge against Vanity.*"

The Mrs. *Reddish*, that was Miss *Hart*, (for the gentleman from whom she takes her name, has had so many *female connexions*, it is impossible to distinguish them, but by their original names) playing the queen in Richard, one night at Drury-lane theatre, and being rather of a coarse masculine make, a gentleman asked Foote, who sat next him, who she was? Being told her name Reddish; " Reddish! Reddish!" says the gentleman, endeavouring to recollect her. " Aye, Sir," added the wit, " *Horse Reddish.*"

Foote and the Delavals being out one night playing their pranks, and kicking up a dust, got into a squabble at a house of ill fame,

ſame, and were going to throw the landlady out of window, after having demoliſhed a number of bowls and other china ware. A conſtable was ſent for, and they were carried before Sir Thomas De Veil, who was then the acting juſtice for Weſtminſter. Though Foote and his companions were well known to the juſtice had they been called by their names, yet he was a ſtranger to their perſons; he began to harangue them harſhly. "Come," ſays he, "Good woman," to the old bawd, "ſtand *before* me, and tell your ſtory." "Aye, do," ſays Foote, "Tell the truth and *face* the *devil*," pointing with his hat to Sir Thomas. However, the juſtice, on hearing their names, ſettled the matter, and diſcharged the culprits.

Foote being at ſupper one night at the Bedford coffee-houſe, juſt after Garrick had performed Macbeth, the converſation very naturally turned on the merits of that great performer; when, after many eulogiums on the univerſality of his powers, it was allowed that he was the firſt actor *on* any *ſtage*.

" Indeed, gentlemen," ſays Foote, " I do not think you have ſaid *half* enough of him, for I think him not only the *greateſt* actor *on*, but *off** the ſtage."

Mr. Foote being aſked his opinion of the Stratford Jubilee, replied, " A Jubilee is a public invitation, urged by puffing, to go poſt without horſes to an obſcure borough without repreſentatives; governed by a mayor and aldermen who are no magiſtrates; to celebrate a great poet, whoſe own works have made him immortal, by an ode without poetry; muſic without melody; a dinner without victuals; lodgings without beds; a croud without company; a maſquerade where half the people appeared bare-faced; a horſe-race up to the knees in water; fire-works extinguiſhed as ſoon as they were lighted; and a boarded booth, by way of amphitheatre, which was to be taken down in three days, and ſold by public auction."

* It was from this hint, perhaps, doctor Goldſmith took the idea of Garrick's character, in his poem called, Retaliation.

Mr.

Mr. Foote walking up and down the rooms at Bath, a gentleman with him, aſked a third, a lady's name juſt then paſſing by them; to which he replied, "Brown, Sir." "Aye," ſays Foote, ſtaring at the lady, "a lovely *Brown* indeed!

Foote being one day at the Britiſh coffee-houſe among the Scotch phyſicians, and ſpeaking of one of the faculty not long from Edinbro', a gentleman aſked Foote, if he kept his coach? "No, Sir," ſays the wit, "his coach keeps him."

When Foote was told of doctor B——n's death, he ſaid, he had cut his throat, to prove (multum in parvo) the rectitude of all his concluſions upon the manners and principles of the times, being the ſum total of all his *theoretical diviſions*, reduced to this ſingle and conciſe rule of practice.

A lady one day taking notice of Foote's feet, which were remarkably long, ſaid, "Lord, Sir, I believe your *Foote* is a yard long.

long." Yes, Ma'am," replies the wit, "and my *Yard* is a foot long."

Foote, at the coffee-houſe, being in company with two gentlemen, one of whom was reproving the other, that he always forgot when his reckoning was paid for him, but was ſure to remember when he paid for any body elſe. "Why," ſays Foote, "'tis owing to an infirmity he has got, he has loſt half his memory."

Foote being aſked his opinion of the author of Triſtram Shandy; replied, "that with all his *ſtars*, he was but an obſcure winter."

Sir William B——, who ſwears almoſt at every word, calling one day on Foote on his return from ſeeing Godfrey's experiment tried, to extinguiſh fire in a houſe, by throwing into the rooms ſome chemical balls which he had prepared, Foote aſked him if the balls anſwered; ſays Sir William, "Aye, damme, they would extinguiſh hell fire; then

then replied the wit, "order a number of them to be put into your coffin."

One day where the wit was in company, the building of Richmond-bridge was the topic; a gentleman aſked, what the piers were to be built of, wood or ſtone. "Stone to be ſure," ſays Foote, "for there are too many *wooden peers* already in this country."

Foote going to Ireland, on a pane of glaſs at an inn at Cheſter ſaw wrote, with a diamond, "My lord D——— has the *ſofteſt* kiſſing lips in the whole world." Upon which he wrote underneath,

"Then as like as two chips,
"Are his head and his lips."

A gentleman talking to Foote of an abſent perſon of their acquaintance, ſaid, he was a dunce. "Nay, now you abuſe him," ſaid Foote, "he is no dunce, but to be ſure he is a damned fool."

The

The firſt night that Savigny (who was by trade a cutler) appeared on the ſtage, Foote went to ſee him. It was in tragedy, and a lady who ſat in the ſame box with him, ſeemed greatly affected with the play. Foote entered into converſation with her, and the new actor of courſe was the topic. Lord," ſays the lady to him, "he is very *cutting*, Sir." "That's not at all wonderful," replied the wit, "for he is a *razor grinder*."

Foote, ſome time ago, took a houſe at Hammerſmith, that was advertiſed to be *compleatly furniſhed*. But he had not been there long before the cook complained there was never a rolling-pin. "No," ſaid he, "then bring me a ſaw, I will ſoon make one." Which he accordingly did, of one of the mahogany bed-poſts. The next day it was diſcovered there wanted a coal-ſcuttle; and he ſupplied this deficiency with a drawer from a curious japan cheſt of drawers. There was never a carpet in the parlour, and he ordered a new white cotton counterpane to be laid to ſave the boards.

His

His landlord paying him a viſit, to inquire how he liked his new reſidence, was greatly aſtoniſhed to find ſuch diſorder, as he conſidered it: he remonſtrated to Mr. Foote, and complained of the injury his furniture had ſuſtained; but the genius inſiſted upon it, all the complaint was on his ſide, conſidering the trouble he had been at to ſupply thoſe neceſſaries, notwithſtanding he had advertiſed his houſe *completely furniſhed*. The landlord now threatend the law; and Foote threatened to take him off, ſaying, an auctioneer was a fruitful character. This laſt conſideration weighed with the landlord, and he quietly put up with his loſs.

Every anecdote of ſo extraordinay a character, naturally excites the curioſity of the Public: When Foote had gained a pretty conſiderable ſum by giving tea, he reſumed the *bon ton*, from which he had been a good while ſequeſtered; and as it was neceſſary to have a lady to do the honours of the table, he took one upon Harris's recommendation, and ſhe was introduced to him at the

Shakeſpeare. He approved of her carving; and, after ſupper was over, ordered her home, as he had in vain endeavoured to make her ſpeak during the whole repaſt; ſaying, "that a ſilent woman, who was a perfect miſtreſs of the honours of bed and board, was one of the moſt deſirable objects upon earth."

Foote rattling away one evening in his green-room with great wit and brilliancy, as he uſually did; the duke of C———d, who was preſent, and ſeemed highly entertained, cried out, "Well, Foote, you ſee I ſwallow all your good things." "Do you, my lord duke," ſays the other, "why then I congratulate you on your digeſtion, for I believe you never *threw up* one of them in your life."

Mr. Foote was once aſked, why learned men are to be found in rich men's houſes, and rich men never to be ſeen in thoſe of the learned, "why," ſays he, "the firſt know what they want, but the latter don't."

At

At the tavern one day after dinner, Foote being in company, pipes and tobacco were called for; the pipes were very ſhort; Foote bid the waiter get ſome others; the waiter replied, they had none, and thoſe were but juſt come in; "Aye," ſays Foote, "one may ſee your maſter has not bought them *very long.*"

Upon Mr. Foote's ſeeing the compliments paid by Mr. Colman to Mr. Garrick, in the prelude to the *Man and Wife*, humorouſly remarked, that it put him in mind of a Ludgate-hill proſtitute, who tickled you with one hand, whilſt ſhe picked your pocket with the other.

The ſame witty genius obſerved, upon being told at the Smyrna that there would certainly be a *coalition*, that he did not doubt but that both *ins* and *outs* would *unite* in—*fleecing the people.*

A certain wou'd-be-wit attempting to divert himſelf at the expence of the Engliſh

Ariſtophanes, when at Stratford, Mr. Foote aſked him abruptly, where he came from? To which the other pertly replied, "From *Eſſex*." "Aye, returned the actor, pray who *drove* you hither?"

A gentleman at Mrs. Cornely's one evening, ſeeing ſome wax fall from a chandelier on that part of a lady's dreſs who ſat next him, not a great way from her boſom, immediately took out his watch, and clapped one of the ſeals upon it. "Bleſs me, Sir, ſaid the lady, what are you doing?" "Why, Madam," ſays Foote, (who was in company with the gentleman) "he is only trying *to make an impreſſion* upon you."

Lord C——, a great crony of Foote's, very fond of fun, and though a lord, not overſtocked with ſenſe, uſed to be continually plaguing Foote about his turning actor, and going on the ſtage. "What," ſays he one day to him, (when there was a good deal of company by) "could poſſeſs you, Foote, to go *on* the ſtage and play the fool."

"The

"The very ſame reaſon that actuates your lordſhip to play it *off*." "What can that be?" "Want," replied the wit. "Want," ſays his lordſhip. "Aye," ſays Foote, "Want of money makes me play the fool, and want of wit, your lordſhip."

Foote, having had an invitation from a certain nobleman, who was reputed to keep a very elegant table, to dine with him, and having no manner of averſion to a good repaſt, he accordingly waited upon his lordſhip; but found the regale far from anſwering his expectation. Upon his taking leave, the ſervants, who were very numerous, had ranged themſelves in the hall; Foote, finding that if he gave to each of them, it would amount to a pretty large ſum, aſked, "Which was the cook;" who readily anſwered, "Me, Sir." He then enquired for the butler, who was as quick in replying as the other; when he ſaid to the firſt, *Here's half a crown for my eating*; and to the other, *Here's five ſhillings for my wine*; *but, by G--d, gentlemen, I never*

I never made ſo bad a dinner for the money in my life.

Foote was, ſome time after, met by the ſame nobleman, who aſked him, "Why he did not come and eat ſoup with him?" "By G—d, my lord, ſaid Foote, I am aſhamed to come, ſince I find your lordſhip keeps a *cook's-ſhop.*" His lordſhip aſked an explanation; when he told the nobleman, "His was the deareſt and worſt *ordinary* in London; for a man paid for his dinner *literally*, and very exorbitantly, at his lordſhip's houſe." Foote was told by his lordſhip, that this ſhould be rectified for the future, and that he ſhould lay ſevere injunctions upon his ſervants to take no vails. Upon this promiſe Foote was prevailed upon to return; but having failed to pay for his dinner, as uſual, the next time he came he had a dirty plate given him for a clean one, bread for beer, and frequently neither one nor t'other, after repeated applications. When dinuer was finiſhed, he addreſſed himſelf to the company, and puſhing round a

plate

plate with half a crown upon it, ſaid, *I think we had better pay for our dinner now, before we begin upon the wine; for I have a notion they imagine we intend to bilk them to-day.*

At a tavern one evening, where the glaſs had gone merrily round, and all the company were mellow, Foote being toaſt-maſter, called on a young nobleman, remarked for his viciouſneſs, for his toaſt. "D—me," ſays he, "I'll give you the Devil." "Well," replies Foote, "I have no objection to any of your lordſhip's friends."

Juſt at the time that news came of the king's army having evacuated Boſton, Chace Price, Foote, and ſome more genius's were at the tavern, and conundrums was the word. When it came to the Foote to propoſe, he gave, Why is Boſton like the Miniſtry? No one could ſolve. At length, Foote being called on for a ſolution, ſaid, "Becauſe it was *abandoned*."

Foote,

Foote, in his younger days, being one night beating the rounds with ſome bucks of his acquaintance, among whom was Charles B———, Eſq; (who was the reputed natural ſon of lord ———, but whoſe mother was very free of her favors to numberleſs others) they got into a ſquabble, and from words they came to blows. At that time, it was the faſhion for gentlemen to carry oak-ſticks, and B——— had one, with which he laid about him moſt unmercifully, on the heads of his aſſailants. Foote bid him be quiet; "for," ſays he, "how do you know, but you may kill your father."

One day in company where Foote was, the ſubjects on the carpet was the emigration of the Scotch to London, one gentleman would have it, that they did not come in ſuch numbers now as they did about a dozen or fourteen years ago, and this he poſitively inſiſted on. Foote, at laſt, took him up, and told him, "he was certainly wrong; but, ſays he, I ſee how you are deceived; you cannot diſtinguiſh them now as formerly, for

for the fellows now all come *breeched* to London."

In all the diſputes Foote uſed to have about the literature of Scotland, he never would allow that any of them were deeply learned. "I'll allow you, ſays he, they all have a *mouthful* of learning, but not one of them has a *bellyful*."

An affected fellow, but a man of fortune, who uſed to call in a morning on Foote, becauſe it was the faſhion to be great with the wit, called one day on him at his country-houſe, at North-end. When he entered the room, he affectedly threw himſelf on a ſopha; Foote aſked him, how he did; to which he anſwered, "I don't know how I do, faith, Foote; I am, I'm *not myſelf*." "Why then, ſays the wit, whoever you have *changed* with, has made a damned bad bargain."

Foote having ſatirized the Scotch pretty ſeverely, a gentleman aſked, "why he hated

that nation ſo much." "You are miſtaken, ſays Foote, I don't hate the Scotch, neither do I hate frogs, but I would have every thing keep to its *native element*."

Anecdote of Mr. Foote.

The day Mr. Foote ſat out for Dover, about an hour before he went into the chaiſe, he walked into every room in his houſe, examined with an accuracy not uſual to him, every article of furniture he had, but more particularly his pictures, of which he had a large and elegant aſſortment. When he came to the portrait of Weſton, he made a full ſtop, as if by ſome ſecret impulſe, and rivetted his eyes upon the countenance of his old acquaintance for above ten minutes, without uttering a ſyllable; then turning off with a tear in his eye, he exclaimed, poor Weſton! But the words had ſcarce dropped from his lips, when, with a tone as it were of reproach for his ſeeming ſecurity, he repeated again, poor Weſton! It will be very ſhortly, poor Foote! or the intelligence of my ſpirits deceive me.

Anecdote

Anecdote concerning Mr. FOOTE.

The Scotch, till lately, were not accuſtomed to ſee plays repreſented even in a decent manner, at Edenbro', the very metropolis. The performers, except one or two, were only fit for dumb lords at the theatres in London: the reaſon given by the managers was, the want of Encouragement. The old theatre was a very miſerable place, and held but a ſmall ſum; the new one, (the theatre-royal) is a handſome building, the inſide neatly ſet off, and the audience well accommodated.

The capital was a long time before they would admit of a company of comedians, and many diſturbances happened, by the attempts of the zealots to ſuppreſs ſtage repreſentations. In the country of Scotland actors were unknown, until one Fiſher carried a company through the highlands, in the years 1767 and 1768, and even then they were hooted as they paſſed the ſtreets; the younger folks now come into the faſhion of frequenting the theatre, but the old ones ſtill conti-

nue great part of their antient diſlike to players, diſtinguiſhing them by the name of *Play-Actors*; and the common people uſe it as a taunt, when they paſs the ſtreets.

So diſagreeably ſituated, a gentleman of any rank in the profeſſion of the ſtage, did not chuſe to go to Edenbro', as it was almoſt impoſſible to form any ſociety but amongſt his brother actors, conſequently the manager picked up his companies the beſt way he could.

However, when Mr. Foote came to Edenbro, he took an elegant houſe on the Caſtle-hill, built in the Engliſh Taſte and handſomely furniſhed, his own coach attended him with his footmen, and he carried down his houſekeeper, who officiated alſo as cook. It ſeems ſhe always went to market, and one morning being ſeized with the rheumatiſm, ſhe had ſome wine made hot; but the fit continuing, and being in her feet, ſhe was obliged to have a ſedan chair home (the fare was but four-pence there.) From the above circumſtance, a paragraph got into

the

the Edenbro' newſpaper, to the following purport:

"The cook of a gentleman juſt come to this city, and whoſe houſe is not far from the Caſtle-hill, every day ſhe goes to market, has a bottle of mull'd wine allowed her, and a chair to carry her home."

When the above was read at Balfour's coffee-houſe, a number of old gentlemen, at the fire ſide, were bethinking themſelves who this perſon could be, that was ſo extravagant. One ſaid, "Egad, it is Foote; for ye ken he lives on the Caſtle-hill, and is juſt come to town." Another anſwered him, "it could not be Foote the play-actor, for the paper ſaid it was the cook of a *gentleman*."

On the death of Mr. FOOTE.

Ye ſons of frolic, mirth, and fun,
Ye jokers hang your head;
Your patron's earthly race is run,
And wit itſelf is dead.

"That

"That cannot be," a bard replies:
"'Tis true that Foote may die;
"But wit immortal ſtill muſt riſe,
"And ſeek her native ſky."

Epigram on the Death of Mr. Foote.

Satire and irony no more
Shall forth their arrows ſhoot,
Ev'n wit muſt fall—the reaſon's plain,
Becauſe ſhe 'as ne'er a *Foote*.

Epitaph on Samuel Foote, Eſq;

Alas! poor Yorick!
Not all thy ſquibs, thy quiddities and joke;
Not all thy cunning cou'd evade the ſtroke.
Thy jeſts that ſet the table in a roar,
Thy wit and humour ſhall be heard no more.
Thy puns, thy ſatire, and thy mimic rage,
No more ſhall grace the table, nor the ſtage.
Now vanity may rear her po mpous creſt,
And vice, in virtue's trappings, may be dreſt:
Low great men indulge themſelves in riot;
And—Dutcheſs drink and live in quiet.

For

For lo! beneath this closing marble lyes,
The scourge of vanity and rod of vice.
Now they may revel, nor exposure dread,
The wit—the mimic—satirist—is dead.

Epitaph on SAMUEL FOOTE, *Esq;*

(*From* SHAKESPEARE.)

Here lies the body of
The ENGLISH ARISTOPHANES!
A FELLOW
Of INFINITE JEST,
Of
Most EXCELLENT FANCY.
Alas!
Where are his GIBES now?
His GAMBOLS, his SONGS,
His
FLASHES of MERRIMENT,
Which
Were wont to set the TABLE in a ROAR?
Not ONE, now,
To MOCK his own GRINNING!
We could have better *spared* a *better* MAN.

He

He was
One of the *beſt actors* in the *world*,
Either for
TRAGEDY, COMEDY, HISTORY, PASTORAL,
OR FARCE,
He held
The MIRROR *up*,
And
Shew'd SCORN her OWN IMAGE.
He was the *abſtract*—and *brief chronicle* of
the *times*.—
In ſhort,
For the law of WIT—and the LIBERTY,
He was
The ONLY MAN!

On Mr. FOOTE's *Death.*

Foote from this earthly ſtage, alas! is hurl'd;
Death took *him off*, who *took off* all the world.

FINIS.

Foote when he got the better of his misfortunes, ſat up an elegant chariot with four fine dun horſes, which at that time were the height of the faſhion; Lord ——— met him one day driving through Hyde Park, when his lordſhip accoſted Foote with, "So Foote, you drive the duns I ſee." "Yes my Lord," reply'd the wit, "'tis high time, for they have driven me a damn'd long while."

Foote one day ſaid a very rude thing to a young lady of ſpirit, in the Long-room at Bath; in return for which, ſhe hit him a ſlap on the face; Foote put up with it for the pleaſure of a pun, in ſaying ſhe was a *ſtriking* beauty.

When Foote was in Edenbro' every complaiſance was ſhewn him with whatever was curious; a gentleman who had been attending him in a tour, asked him what he thought the moſt agreeable in Scotland? "Why, to be plain with you, ſaid Foote, the road to England is by much the fineſt thing you have in Scotland."

A few years ago when Mr. Garrick had ſome thoughts of quitting the ſtage, he went round the country of England, paying viſits to ſeveral of the nobility and gentry, and where he came, he always left ſome couplets of poetry, fill'd with the moſt fulſome praiſes of his hoſt and his family. Foote being told this, wrote the following lines on the occaſion.

Wherever Garrick dines or ſleeps,
He drops a doggrel rhime;
The ſnail thus marks the roads ſhe creeps,
By ſlobb'ring ſordid ſlime.

At Paris it is the cuſtom when they collect charity throughout a pariſh, and beg from door to door, for two or three ladies, generally the handſomeſt and of the firſt rank to accompany the collector; Foote was in that city when a collection was making in the ſtreet where he lodged, but being very low in caſh, though he never wanted charity, he was hard put to it for an excuſe; he was undreſs'd, and before he could get out they wou'd have been

been at the door; whilſt he was ruminating, they ſtop'd at the Hotel where he lodged, and were coming up ſtairs, on which he called out very loud to his ſervant, "Peter, don't let any body come up without firſt acquainting them that there is a gentleman here ill of the ſmall pox." Immediately on hearing this, the ladies, &c. went down ſtairs without asking for charity.

Mr. Reynolds was one day at Foote's when the duke of York called in; during the converſation, his highneſs ſpeaking of Wilkes, who was then a great topic of diſcourſe, he asked Mr. Reynolds, what time Mr. Wilkes went to bed at night? And pray, ſays Foote, (without giving Reynolds time to anſwer his highneſs) and what time does he get up in a morning, for I find you are his *chamberlain*, and not his attorney.

Foote walking with a lady in the Park, whilſt the king was paſſing by, ſhe obſerved to the wit, that his majeſty had a very broad pair of ſhoulders; to which he reply'd, the

king had need of them; "consider madam," said he, "the weighty affairs of the nation lye upon them."

At Cornelly's masquerade one night, a young lady of *king*'s *place*, in dancing trod on her train and fell backwards; Foot passing by, said to her *practice makes perfect*.

Sir Charles —— having set up a fine new chariot, and being at a house where Foote was, desired him to look at it; I had it says he in the newest fashion; "no" says Foote, "I believe you had it in the old fashion;" "aye, says Sir Charles, how is that?" Why, "reply'd Foote," "never to pay for it."

Garrick in company one day with Foote, and talking of the play of Tamerlane, the former said, there were three of the best acting parts in it that ever were written; that I don't believe, reply'd the latter, you never play'd one of them, and if they had been the best, you would certainly have had a touch at one of them.

A dyer at Dublin, was an evidence for Foote on his trial with Faulkner; when the book was given the evidence to ſwear, the alderman bid him pull off his glove; put on your ſpectacles, ſays Foote, don't you ſee the man's a dyer.

Foote experienced a number of viciſſitudes in life, ſometimes up and often down; he kept his carriage when he firſt ſat out in life, but put it down ſoon after; when he ſat it up again he chang'd his motto, and choſe *Iterum*; (i. e. again) ſoon however misfortunes obliged him to diſpoſe of it; about a twelvemonth after he found means to get another, and now the motto was again chang'd, and inſtead of *Iterum*, it was *Iterum Iterumque* (i. e. again and again.)

Sir Francis Blake Delaval, the old crony and companion of Foote, when honour'd with the order of the Bath, was ſo fond of the ribbon that he wore it wherever he went; indeed by the rules of the order, the ſtar is always to be worn on the outer garment; however, Sir Francis was noticed for his fond-

neſs

neſs for this bauble; it was mentioned where Foote was in company, who ſaid as before obſerv'd, that the knights were obliged to wear it, and Sir Francis ſaid he, is ſo ſtrict an obſerver of the rules, that one morning when I call'd on him at his houſe at Hampton, I found him ſwimming in the Thames with a ſtar upon the cork jacket he had on.

Foote being at a rout among a number of ladies, in came Sir Charles —— an impudent fellow, but with ſome wit; among a number of queſtions he put to the company, he aſked lady A—, who was in her 67th year, what opinion old ladies had of love? She bluſh'd, but Foote ſav'd her from the ſneer of the company in taking up the matter. "Sir "Charles, ſaid Foote, When lady A— is ten "years older, ſhe may perhaps be able to an- "ſwer your very impudent queſtion." Her ladyſhip curtſied, and ever after prov'd to him a very good friend.

Mrs. Foote was as great an humouriſt as our hero her ſon; ſhe being committed to the King's Bench on the ſurrender of her bail, wrote to him, who was then in a ſpunging houſe for debt the following line.

Dear

Dear Sam I am now in priſon! ——
Dear mother ſo am I,
Was all her dutiful child return'd as an anſwer.

A clergyman at Eveſham, in Worceſterſhire, ſent to Dr. P—e who was at dinner at Foote's, (who had a ſeat near that place) to beg leave for his curate to do duty for him, as he had occaſion to go to Worceſter; Dr. P—e told the ſervant, that he was not very *well*, and therefore ſhould want his curate to do duty for himſelf; aye, ſays Foote, and tell your maſter that he has eat three pounds of turkey for dinner, and therefore he may be aſſured that he is *ſick*.

Mr. Foote was invited to the mayor's feaſt at Eveſham, where there was a great deal of company; in converſation, Sir John Ruſhout, who was one of the gueſts, aſked the mayor how Mrs. mayoreſs did? to which he anſwered, She was but poorly; being of a *delicate* conſtitution ſhe was ſubject to be always ailing! "O yes, ſays Foote, I can anſwer for "her *delicacy*; I call'd on her this morning, "and ſhe was eating a large meſs of leek "porridge, and ſtank like any pole-cat."

On

(4)

On Mr. Foote's Death.

nearly

Many a foot made up one rhyme,
But our great *Foote* in his own time,
Made many a rhime and feet to boot,
And became a many-footed *Foote*.
With hum'rous feet he nimbly run
Through many a farce, droll,
He caper'd on the stage a pace,
And cracked the ear of many an ass,
Cut off with stockings and
Danc'd out great *Foote* for many a year.
Till near the lands end he had got,
Full distanc'd death then form'd a plot.
In laughing mirth he hid his head,
And with a joke trip'd *Foote* so dead,
For every foot that he could boast,
Now triumph'd over his forlorn,
With direful dance proclaim him dead,
And foot mad jigs upon his head.

FINIS.